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VOL. 1. No. 4.

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Issue*



THE LITTLE WALTER STORY . LAVERN BAKER
FREDDY KING . LITTLE RICHARD DISCOGRAPHY
SLIM HARPO . RUFUS THOMAS

THE BLUES FESTIVAL 1964

Editorial . . .

This business of defining "Rhythm and Blues" is getting somewhat out of hand. Hardly a week goes by without someone writing an angry letter to the musical press contradicting the views of a previous pundit. Naturally it makes one's blood boil to see Fleet Street in general describe almost any group on the scene as being an "R & B" group, but does it really matter? Blues fans are not easily fooled, and if the dear old public chooses to believe that this country is inhabited by thousands of "Rhythm and Blues" groups, let them. As far as I'm concerned, there are maybe a dozen groups in this country who really can do something. We mentioned four in the last issue, and shall continue to do so with great enthusiasm whenever a good one comes along. Not because we regard ourselves as having a right to do so, but because we've heard so much utter rubbish sold under the name of "Rhythm and Blues."

Take a listen to the Sheffields next time they're around. Granted, their "Mojo" record was hardly the greatest, but they have that certain something, and could do really well if they got a chance.

I would like to take space to thank all of you who have written to me. I've tried to reply to as many letters as possible, but I'm afraid time forbids replies to everyone. Please do keep sending in your views. Every letter is carefully read, and we set a lot of store by your opinions. Many people have asked for discographies. Well, since Blues Unlimited and R & B Monthly do so much splendid work in this respect I have been a bit shy of competing, but you'll find what we hope is a full Little Richard discography on page ten. Any additions or corrections are very welcome, and we'll print them in the next issue.

At the moment R'n B Scene appears every two months. We hope that fairly soon the magazine will appear monthly. So, if you like what we're doing, why not tell your friends about R'n B Scene, and help us reach more people you think may be interested. I know a lot of you have done this already, and I have a pile of letters in front of me as I write this to prove it. Many thanks. (In fact our mail has quadrupled since the first issue).

Please drop us a line if you have time. We really do like hearing from you.

THE EDITOR.

Write to:

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THE LITTLE WALTER STORY

— MIKE LEADBITTER —

When R & B enthusiasts discuss the merits of various harmonica players, the name that crops up time after time is that of Marion Walter Jacobs, better known to the record buying public as Little Walter. The reason for this is simple. Not only was Little Walter the first man to use amplified harmonica commercially, but also his sheer genius in this medium leaves him without a rival. He is one of the post-war period's greatest talents — as a musician, as the possessor of a really "bluesy"

voice, and as a session man who "made" records for other artistes through the brilliance of his accompaniment.

A small man of light complexion, Walter hails from the small town of Alexander in Louisiana, where he was born on the first of May 1930. As a small child his interest in music, especially blues, developed rapidly. Influenced by Sonny Boy Williamson (No. 1.), he began to play the harp at the age of eight, and became so proficient that by the time his twelfth birthday came along he was playing professionally in the small clubs of New Orleans! Throughout the war years a very "little" Walter played and sang on. Leaving his home he moved from town to town, sometimes stopping for a longish period, but always heading towards the North, and Chicago. In 1947 he arrived in the Windy City by way of St. Louis. Although only seventeen, he was already a veteran in the musical world.

Like hundreds before him, Walter began his chosen career in Chicago by playing on the streets — depending on passers-by for his living. However his obvious talents soon made him a member of up-and-coming bluesmen, headed by Sunnyland Slim, who had achieved some fame locally, and who had been recorded by small local labels.

In this group were men like Muddy Waters, Baby Face

Leroy, Jimmy Rogers, Johnny Young, and Floyd Jones. Men whose records are eagerly sought for today by serious collectors, but, except in the case of Muddy Waters, have been forgotten by a public only too conscious of Tin Pan Alley. With people like these Little Walter first found himself in a recording studio. His very young sounding voice, and already distinctive harp sounds were heard on records by Muddy, Baby Face Leroy, and Sunnyland Slim, on now obscure labels like Parkway, and Tempo-Tone, or under his own name on Ora-Nelle, Chance, Regal and Herald. These records were not very successful by today's standards, but they helped to establish the name and the sound of Little Walter.

In 1951, "the man most likely to succeed", Muddy Waters, used Little Walter on some of his first sessions for Chess, and also signed him up for his club band. The Muddy Waters Band has always been the springboard to fame for musicians lucky enough to join its select company, and Walter was one of the first examples of this. In 1953 he was signed by the Chess Brothers to record for their subsidiary, Checker. His first session produced his fabulous "Juke", and almost at once the record became a smash R & B hit. Little Walter with his new sound, and in the company of top Chess session men like Louis and David

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Little Walter—Photo Brian Smith

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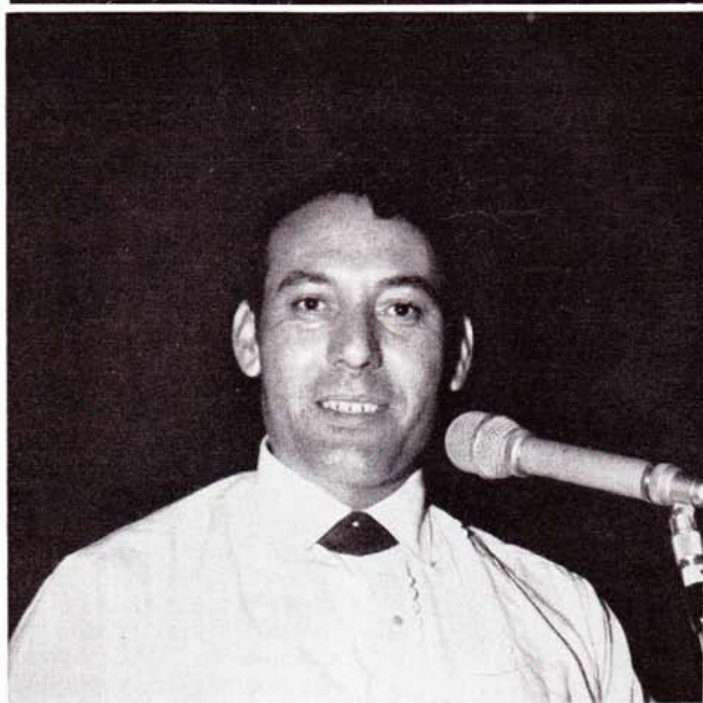
Miles, Otis Spann, Robert Lockwood Jr., Luther Tucker, Willie Dixon and Fred Beelow, then produced a string of successful records. "My Babe," "Off The Wall," "Rocker," "Roller Coaster," "Blues With A Feeling," and "Confessin' The Blues." He became Little Walter the recording star!

So he left Muddy's band, and began his career as a solo artiste, forming his own group, calling them "The Jukes." He then began the endless series of tours and personal engagements that go with being a big name. His popularity continued well into the late fifties with the general R & B record-buying public, but then it began to slacken off as new names and sounds came along. He continued to record for Checker — still producing beautiful blues like "Key To The Highway," "Crazy Legs," "I've Had My Fun," among others such as "Crazy For My Baby," "Temperature," "Boom, Boom, Out Go The Lights" etc. These numbers didn't sell as well as they would have done once, and Checker tried in vain to boost sales with a re-issue of "My Babe," with girl-choir added. They also tried Walter with a larger band backing including saxes and organ for "Southern Feeling," but not

with any success. Walter was, and always will be, a small combo man, his finest sides being cut with two guitars, and a drummer to provide a rhythm background to the powerful, but intricate sounds of his harp, and now and then his short, intense vocals.

Little Walter still works the

clubs in Chicago, and makes regular tours down South where he is still immensely popular. He is one of the cornerstones of the rhythm and blues world, and, although is perhaps no longer among the leaders, still has a very great influence over other artistes. He will certainly go down in history as one of the "Greats."



**The fish in the rivers of Tennessee are mighty glad
Carl Perkins is in England—and so are we**

*Photo:
Brian Smith*

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Those of you who remember the hey-day of rock 'n roll — the mid 1950's — will think with nostalgia of the time when the Atlantic Record Company practically dominated the American charts. Names like Chuck Willis, The Coasters, Ivory Joe Hunter, Ruth Brown, Joe Turner, and in particular, LaVern Baker, continually found their way into the U.S. Top Twenty, providing us with some of the most rocking music ever heard. It is LaVern Baker, one of Atlantic's most prolific hit-getters, that I will write about here.

LaVern was born on Armistice Day, 1929, in Chicago, was introduced to music through her local Baptist Church, and made her singing debut at the age of twelve. When she reached the age of seventeen, George and Mabel Woods, Chicago night club owners, signed her up, and renamed her "Little Miss Sharecropper." She started her professional career at the Club DeLisa, and was heard by the famed bandleader Fletcher Henderson. Fletcher was so impressed with her that he took her to Columbia Records; her first record, and hit, "When I'm In A Crying Mood" was the result.

It wasn't until 1952 that the big break came however. LaVern had been singing with the popular Todd Rhodes Orchestra, and on July 1st, was invited to a record session, featured as vocalist with them. She recorded "tryin'" and "Pig Latin Blues," The former was a huge hit. She was rushed back to the studios the following October, and found herself with another hit — "Must I Cry Again." Cashing in on her success, she went for a six months tour of Europe.

When she returned to the States she was signed by Atlantic, and in July 1953,

LaVern Baker



LaVern Baker

Photo courtesy Atlantic Records

by Mike Leadbitter

found herself in the studios again. Once more she had a hit with "Soul On Fire"! In 1954 her hit was "Tweedle Dee," followed by "Bop-Ting-A-Ling," "That Lucky Old Sun," and "Jim Dandy" in 1955. LaVern found herself the female vocalist in America, topping everybody's polls! 1956 was comparatively peaceful, but 1957 found her high in the charts again with "Tra La La," and "Humpty Dumpty Heart," which she sang in "Rock, Rock, Rock," the Alan Freed musical. "Whipper Snapper," and "Harbor Lights" also did well in the same year.

Could she continue to produce hits at this rate? The

answer was unfortunately, no. With rock 'n roll on the wane, LaVern's sales, along with hundreds of other stars, dropped. Although she had minor hits with "Tiny Tim" and "Shake A Hand" in 1959, and "Bumble Bee" in 1960, LaVern couldn't hope to repeat the success of her early years. This doesn't mean to say that her popularity vanished completely! She is still a great box-office draw and continues to sell enough records to keep the famous smile on her face! An established and polished performer, she has adapted her style to suit current trends, and the sheer number of her hits has ensured that her name will never be forgotten by her fans. As far as LaVern is concerned, "Jim Dandy" will never have to come to the rescue!



LITTLE JUNIOR PARKER — *Photo Courtesy Duke Records*

FREDDY KING — Mike Leadbitter

At a recent show at the Civic Auditorium in Chicago, the name that drew the greatest applause, during an act was that of Freddy King. This was quite a feat, as Freddy is comparatively new to the scene, and among the other stars on the bill were Junior Parker, and the tremendously popular B. B. King! Freddy's technically magnificent guitar-work, plus some searing vocals, even made him out-king B. B. King, his greatest influence!

However, all this happened on the other side of the Atlantic. Freddy still has to achieve the acclaim in this country, that is given to him wherever he goes in the States. Here is a brief outline of his musical life.

Freddy was born in Longview, Texas, on the 30th September, 1934, and took up the guitar at the age of ten. His greatest influences, during the formation of his own style, were B. B. King, and T-Bone Walker, both very popular in the South during the late 'forties, and early 'fifties. Traces of the influence of these artistes, especially that of his namesake, B. B. King, are still evident in his work today, although he has achieved a greater mastery of the guitar, musically, than they.

While in his 'teens Freddy made the journey to Chicago, and in 1953 made his debut with the band of a harmonica player named Little Sonny Cooper. With this band he did the usual club dates, and also cut some sides backing Sonny for Parrot. By 1954 he had joined another group, under the leadership of another harmonica-player,

called Payton and his Blues Cats. Again he recorded as backing musician for Parrot, this time backing Payton. These sessions eventually led to recordings under his own name.

When the Bronzeville Record Manufacturing Co., who owned the Parrot/Bluelake labels, folded in the late fifties, "Lawyer" John Burton, one of the owners, started his own label, calling it El-Bee. He remembered session-man Freddy, and allowed Freddy to cut his first side for the new label. The song "Country Boy," was issued on El-Bee 157, and although it was only a local success, it brought Freddy to the attention of the powerful King (it had to be that name!) group, who signed him to their subsidiary, Federal.

In 1960 he had quite a hit with his version of "Have you ever loved a woman" (Federal 12384) — an old B. B. King

number — and then had his biggest ever smash with an instrumental called "Hide-away." (Federal 12401). This rocking thing was also issued in England on the Parlophone label. The flip, "I Love The Woman" is one of Freddy's best ever numbers in my opinion. A slow blues, again a la B. B. King it featured some very wonderful guitar and a moving vocal.

From then up until now Freddy hasn't looked back. He has had one success after another. This can be judged by the long list of singles that have appeared since 1960, and a best-selling album on King (821). These songs range from "down-home" blues and R & B to pop items and instrumentals, he has even teamed with Lulu Reed on several occasions, but through it all the individual stamp of Freddy King has

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Freddy King — Photo Courtesy King Records

Suggestions for building a Rhythm and Blues Record Collection

This page is intended to help R'n B fans who may be new to the music, or who do not have time to listen to many records before buying. It covers, for the main part, 45's that were released some time ago, and which may have been overlooked. For reviews of up-to-date record releases, please see page 12.

All the records reviewed below are recommended. A short description of each record follows the label and number. All of them have been released in the States within the last year or two, and should be easily available from the normal shops.

Do The Do/Mama's Baby. Howlin' Wolf. Chess 1844.

Buddy Guy's band backs the Wolf on two up-tempo rockers. Both are powerhouse recordings and are unlike anything he has had released in this country.

Buzz Me Babe/Late Last Night. Slim Harpo. Excello 2171.

Heavy crashing beat to the top side, while the flip is more bluesy. One of Slim Harpo's best.

Part Time Love/Somewhere Down The Line. Little Johnny Taylor. Galaxy 722.

A long, slow, powerful record, with excellent sax and guitar work, this is one that really grows on you. Flip is much faster with wailing harp.

Fine Little Mama/Done Somebody Wrong. Elmore James. Fire 1031.

Definitely a must. There aren't too many records by the late Elmore James available, and this is one of the best. Piano helps a very strong record. A very clear recording that gets away from his somewhat stereotyped Kent discs. Fast rocking blues.

Don't Drive Me Away/I Believe We Love Each Other. R. C. Smith. Arhoolie 502.

Two magnificently simple blues from Robert Curtis Smith. Great country blues guitar drives both sides. Absolutely essential for any blues fan worthy of the name.

Your Turn To Cry/Chains Around My Heart. James Davis Duke 374.

A surprise from Duke. Very much in the Buddy Guy field this one is an extremely good slow blues in the modern style. Excellent lyric and hard-hitting delivery make this a rewarding disc. Flip is fast, but pales compared to the blues upstairs.

Temperature/Boom, Boom, Out Go The Lights. Little Walter. Checker 867.

Picked more or less at random from a stack of Little Walter records from a few years back, this is the pioneer of the electric harp at his best. Top side a rough mid-tempo blues, while flip is faster with some angry breaks.

Sack O' Woe/Sailor Man Waltz. Markeys. Satellite 129.

The old Cannonball Adderley number done very well with great organ and sax work from the Markeys. We just aren't getting enough of this sort of record released in this country. This is definitely one to drive the old dear wild with on Sunday afternoons.

You Can't Lose What You Ain't Never Had/The Same

Thing. Muddy Waters. Chess 1895.

Not a classic from Muddy, but much better than a lot of things he did at the height of the twist craze. Both medium tempo uncomplicated blues.

Jelly Roll King/Crawlback —Frank Frost—Phillips International 3578

Frank Frost will be a new name to most, but is already becoming a favourite with people who take the trouble to dig a little. Both sides excellent—plenty of good harp and guitar work. Side two is an instrumental with some great bass-slapping.

My Babe/House, Car, And A Wedding Ring—Dale Hawkins—Checker 906.

A fantastic record. "My Babe" contains some of the most brilliant bass-playing you've ever heard, and is taken at a very fast tempo. Utterly unlike any other version of this well-known song. Flip is terrible, so ignore it, and buy a new diamond needle in honour of the Dixon special.

Long Leanin Mama/My Starter Won't Work—Lightnin' Slim—Excello 2142.

Both tracks from the well-loved "Rooster Blues" L.P. A very good introduction to one of Excello's great bluesmen "My Starter Won't Work" is a slow blues with excellent accompaniment, while the other side is faster. Typically good Excello material, and that means very good indeed.



SLIM HARPO

LITTLE RICHARD

— DISCOGRAPHY —

COMPILED BY PAUL ROBERTON

CAMDEN

- 4392—Taxi Blues/Every Hour.
- 4582—Get Rich Quick/Thin-kin' About My Mother.
- 4772—Ain't Nothing Happening/Why Did You Leave Me.
- 5052—I Brought It All On Myself/Please Have Mercy On Me.

The above tracks were issued in England on an L.P. called "Little Richard" on Camden CDN 125, along with four tracks by Buck Ram's band backing Don Wyatt and Eddie Williams.

PEACOCK

- 1616—Fool At The Wheel/Ain't That Good News.
- 1628—Always/Rice, Red Beans, & Turnip Greens.
- 1658—Little Richard's Boogie/Directly From My Heart To You.
- 1673—Maybe I'm Right/I Love My Baby.

SPECIALTY

(British issue numbers follow record title).

- 561—Tutti Frutti/I'm Just A Lonely Guy.
- 572—Long Tall Sally/Slippin' And Slidin'
- 579—Ready Teddy/Rip It Up—HLD 8336.
- Long Tall Sally/Tutti Frutti—HLD 8366.
- 584—She's Got It/Heebie Jeebies.
- 591—The Girl Can't Help It/All Around The World.
- The Girl Can't Help It/She's Got It—HLD 8382.
- 598—Lucille/Send Me Some Lovin'—HLD 8446.
- 606—Jenny Jenny/Miss Ann—HLD 8470.

- 611—Keep A Knockin'/Can't Believe You Wanna Leave—HLD 8509.

- 624—Good Golly Miss Molly/Hey, Hey, Hey, Hey—HLD 8560.

- 633—Ooh My Soul/True Fine Mama—HLD 8647.

- 645—Baby Face/I'll Never Let You Go—HLD 8770.

- 652—Early One Morning/She Knows How To Rock.

- 660—By The Light Of The Silvery Moon/Wonderin'.
By The Light Of The Silvery Moon/Early One Morning—HLD 8831.

- 664—Kansas City/Lonesome And Blue.

- Kansas City/She Knows How To Rock—HLU 8868.

- 670—Shake A Hand/All Night Long.

- 680—Maybe I'm Right/Whole Lotta Shakin'.

- 681—Baby/I Got It—HLU 9065.

- 686—Directly From My Heart/The Most I Can Offer.

- 692—Bama Lama Bama Loo/Annie's Back—HL 9896.

MERCURY

- 71965—He Got What He Wanted/Why Don't You Change Your Ways AMT 1189.

- 71884—Joy, Joy, Joy/He's Not Just A Soldier—AMT 1165.

END

- 1057—Save Me Lord/Troubles Of The World.

- 1058—Milky White Way/I've Just Come From The Fountain.

ATLANTIC

- 2181—Hole In The Wall/Crying At The Chapel—HLK 9708.

- 2192—Travellin' Shoes/It Is No Secret—HLK 9756.

LITTLE STAR

- 123—I'm In Love Again/Every Night About This Time.

The above credits the Upsetters, Little Richard's backing group, but Richard is definitely the vocalist.

SPECIALTY L.P.'s.

SP 2100—Here's Little Richard.

Tutti Frutti/True Fine Mama/Can't Believe You Wanna Leave/Ready Teddy/Baby Slippin' And Slidin'/Long Tall Sally/Miss Ann/Oh Why/Rip It Up/Jenny Jenny/She's Got It.

Above L.P. issued on London HAU 2126.

SP 2103—Little Richard Vol. 2.

Keep A Knockin'/By The Light Of The Silvery Moon/Send Me Some Lovin'/I'll Never Let You Go/Heebie Jeebies/All Around The World/Good Golly Miss Molly/Baby Face/Hey, Hey, Hey, Hey/Ooh My Soul/The Girl Can't Help It/Lucille HAU 2126.

SP 2104—The Fabulous Little

Richard. Shake A Hand/Chicken Little Baby/All Night Long/The Most I Can Offer/Lonesome And Blue/Wonderin'/She Knows How To Rock/Kansas City/Directly From My Heart/Maybe I'm Right/Early One Morning/I'm Just A Lonely Guy/Whole Lotta Shakin' Going On. HAU 2193.

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SP 2111—**Little Richard's Biggest Hits.** Rip It Up/Lucille/Jenny Jenny/All Around The World/Good Golly Miss Molly/Long Tall Sally/Slippin' And Slidin'/Send Me Some Lovin'/I'll Never Let You Go/True Fine Mama/Keep A Knockin'/Tutti Frutti.

CORAL

57446—**Comin' Home.** Just A Closer Walk With Thee/Comin' Home/Search Me Lord/I Want Jesus To Walk With Me/Milky White Way/Need Him/Everytime I Feel The Spirit/Does Jesus Care/I'm Tramping/God Is Real/Jesus Walked/Precious Lord.

20TH CENTURY FOX

Little Richard Sings Gospel. Every Time I Feel The Spirit/I'm Trampin'/Milky White Way/Does Jesus Care/Comin' Home/I Know The Lord/I've Just Come From The Fountain/God Is Real/Troubles Of The World/Certainly Lord/Tell God My Troubles/Precious Lord. Stateside SL 10054.

MERCURY

MCL 125,010 **King Of The Gospel Singers.** It's Real/Joy, Joy, Joy/Do You Care/The Captain Calls For You/In Times Like These/Do Lord, Remember Me/Ride On King Jesus/Peace In The Valley/He's Not Just A Soldier/My Desire/He's My Star/It Takes Everything To Serve The Lord.

SPIN O RAMA

MI19—**Clap Your Hands.** Every Time I Feel The Spirit/Certainly Lord/Walk With Me/In My Heart/Troubles Of The World/I'm Quitting Show Business/Search Me/I Know The Lord/All About It/He Is Real.

TOP RANK

Top Rank intended to issue two Little Richard L.P.'s here

before they folded, several copies of the first became available. Tracks on it are:

25/026—Just A Closer Walk With Thee/Milky White Way/Does Jesus Care/Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley/Comin' Home/I've Just Come From The Fountain/I'm Trampin'/Need Him/God Is Real/Precious Lord.

VEE JAY

Whole Lotta Shakin'/Good-night Irene. Stateside SS 340.

We would like to hear from anyone who has any additions or corrections to this discography.

TOMMY TUCKER

A Mystery No Longer

Neil Carter and Roger Eagle.

Interviewing Tommy Tucker, with Eric Burden and Allan Price of the Animals frequently interrupting to discuss a point mentioned with their usual vigour, is not easy. However, we did find out some facts about this very talented artiste which we hope are interesting. Two great releases in this country, plus a great deal of experience singing and playing to all types of audiences in the States, to which one adds a sharp personality and an ability to play several instruments made for a stage act which was really well-received. His background is one of modern jazz and the blues. His love of music is evident to anyone who does more than to ask for his autograph, and, once started, he has difficulty in stopping when asked about the blues scene in the States.

"Man, you want to hear the real blues?" he asked, "I'll tell

you where to find where its at. Listen to the migratory farm-workers who play in the small clubs, or maybe just for themselves. They come out of the fields with their hands stained with, say strawberry juice, or maybe loganberry, and get themselves a jug of cheap wine. Then they play. Man, their music is direct. The real thing. Every so often I draw some money out of the bank, and just go downtown to listen to them and have a ball."

He was a little vague about his early recordings, but stated that he had waxed a number called "Rock 'n Roll Machine" for Atlantic. He was directed to Chess by Herb Abraham, who he said is responsible for a great deal of the many fine rhythm and blues recordings for both Chess and Atlantic. His favourite artistes are Ray Charles, Lloyd Price, and the late Chuck Willis. He claimed that his influences come partly from T-Bone Walker and Jimmy Reed, but said that he listens to everybody who puts out the real stuff and takes a bit from each. He is, as was expected, the author of "High Heel Sneakers," "Long Tall Shorty," and "Slip-In Mules," writing under his real name, R. Higgenbotham. He also plays organ on the sessions.

He said that he liked to think of his style of singing as modern blues. We think that here is one man who would be far more suited to a club tour than a series of one-night concert stands. He is a real entertainer, as well as being a fine singer, and anyone who has heard him sing such numbers as Alvin Robinson's "Something You Got" will need no convincing on this point. Let's hope he returns in the near future to sing in the more receptive atmosphere of our clubs.



**Oldies R & B — Various
Artists—Stateside SL
10094.**

High Blood Pressure — Huey 'Piano' Smith/Kansas City—Wilbert Harrison/I like It Like That — Chris Kenner/Duke Of Earl — Gene Chandler/Over And Over — Bobby Day/Is You Is, Or Is You Ain't My Baby — Buster Brown/More Money — Jennell Hawkins/Ya Ya — Lee Dorsey/I Need Your Loving — Don Gardner & Dee Dee Ford/Sea Cruise — Frankie Ford/You Threw A Lucky Punch — Gene Chandler/Little Bitty Pretty One — Bobby Day/Operator — Gladys Knight/Rockin' Pneumonia And The Boogie Woogie Flu — Hughie "Piano" Smith.

The Vee Jay, Ace, and Fire labels form the base for most of these recordings, some vintage, some quite recent. A very strange mixture, but this L.P. contains some gems which are really worth having. Into the latter category fall the Hughie "Piano" Smith tracks, plus "Sea Cruise." At least half the L.P. may be considered reasonably good rhythm and blues, with "I Need Your Loving" standing out a mile. Why this never took off here on a single I'll never know. The Bobby Day tracks are an odd choice for someone who has plenty of original material of his own, but they're quite reasonable versions of the old rock hits. The other side of the Buster Brown single from which this track is taken is far better, being called "Don't

Dog Your Woman," still, one can't expect every track on an LP. like this to be brilliant. It does contain sufficient worthwhile material to make it worth buying, but why include stuff like "Operator," when there's so much available on Fire, for example, that could be classed as R & B Oldies in the greatest possible sense?



**Two Steps From The Blues
—Bobby Bland. Vocalion
VA 160183.**

Two Steps From The Blues /Cry, Cry, Cry/I'm Not Ashamed/Don't Cry No More/Lead Me On/I Pity The Fool/I've Just Got To Forget You/Little Boy Blue/St. James Infirmary/I'll Take Care Of You /I Don't Want No Woman/I've Been Wrong For So Long.

R'N B SCENE is very pro-Bland. And not without good reason. Bobby Bland has probably the greatest blues-based vocal style of all the bigger band singers. This L.P. contains more Bland classics than any other, and must be bought by anyone who has ever admired any of his work. Standout tracks abound, but possibly the best of all is "I Pity The Fool," a magnificent song, with some wild singing from Bobby, with an almost religious-sounding brass section backing him. "St. James Infirmary," and "Cry, Cry, Cry" are both brilliant examples of Bland's powerful ballads, while "Don't Cry No More" is a fast rocker, with a drum-break somewhat like his great "Turn On Your Lovelight." "Little Boy Blue" is another excellent track, with a climax wilder than any other. Our only regret is that this

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ZACHERLE ON RECORD

Monster Mash — Parkway P 7018

Monster Mash/Hurry Bury Baby / Let's Twist Again (Mummy Time Is Here) / I'm The Ghoul From Wolverton Mountain/Gravy (With Some Cyanide) / Popeye (The Grave-digger) / Limb From Limbo Rock / Weird Watusi / Pistol Stomp/Dinner With Drac/The Ha-Ha-Ha/The Bat.

Scary Tales — Parkway P 7023

Scary Tales / A-Tisket, A-Casket/Hansel & Gretel/Clementine / Happy Halloween / Monster Monkey / The Spider & The Fly/A-B-C/Little Red Riding Hood/Surfboard 109/ Dear, Dear Valentine.

The article on John Zacherle in R'N B SCENE No. 1, provoked so much interest that I decided to write Cameo and ask for further details of his recordings. They very kindly sent these two L.P.'s and a photo. Of the two albums, the one which should appeal most to lovers of "Dinner With Drac" is the first one. Nearly all the tracks are take-offs of then current dance-crazes, with suitably gory lyrics. The sound



is really something on this L.P. The studio band is very good and is presumably the same one as on the original recordings. "Ghoul From Wolverton Mountain" is one of the stand-

out tracks, with Zacherle taking it straight until the last verse or two. As bullets whine off the rocks, one hears "Igor, I believe you're leaking there . . ." and

continued overleaf

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so on. Other tracks refer to the practice of twisting a mummy in order to obtain some mummy-juice, a favourite drink of Zacherle's apparently; Poppe who is digging a grave for the whole human race; how much easier it is to do the limbo if one has no arms or legs; and an incident in Miami when Zacherle's efforts to bury his late girl-friend are frustrated by the tide.

"Scary Tales" suffers from trying to be a little too clever. The backings are, again, first class, but the lyrics are sometimes a little contrived even for Zacherle. There are some good tracks, notably "Clementine," and "Surfboard 109," but as a whole it doesn't measure up to the high standard of the "Monster Mash" L.P. Basically, the L.P. consists of nursery rhymes set to a modern jazz rhythm with new lyrics. "Little Red Riding Hood" is a good example of this.

Both albums have great covers, and are well produced. I am quite sure a lot of people would buy them if issued here, especially the first one. It looks as though Zacherle fans will have to rely on importing them for the time being at any rate.

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remained. He still does session-work, especially on Chicago sessions arranged by pianist/A & R man Sonny Thompson. You can hear his unique sounds behind Smokey Smothers on the latter's L.P. for King — "Smokey Smothers Plays The Back-Porch Blues."

"Sen-sa-Shun," "San-Ho-Zay," "Side-Tracked," "Driving Sideways," "I'm Tore Down," "Lonesome Whistle Blues," and many more, all bear the distinctive mark of this exciting artiste. If none of these titles are in your record collection, maybe it's about time you discovered Freddy King for yourselves.

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RECORD REVIEWS

Continued from Page 12

L.P. was received just two days too late for inclusion in the last edition of the magazine. We hope we're not too late to recommend this L.P. unreservedly to anyone with an ear for the finer things.



The Whammy/Strange—

Screamin' Jay Hawkins.

Roulette 45 4579.

This is powerful stuff from the master raver. As reported in an earlier edition of R'n B Scene, this is a voodoo number, with references to moonlight, mojo bones, shot-guns, and spells. It's a different recording to the one he cut for the "Sound Of Hawaii" label, and the change is for the better. It should be issued here before long. The flip is a faster dance number, but filled with Jay's own special lyrics. In the States they don't know which to class as the A side, but here I think the voodoo side has the edge.

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THE BLUES FESTIVAL 1964

Impressions by — John White — Neil Carter — Dave Waggett — Brian Smith — Roger Eagle

What is there to say? A series of concerts in this country with a bill as strong as the one presented, can leave no-one unimpressed by the power of the blues. Reviewing this sort of concert in terms of the actual music seems invidious. There's no point in comparing Sleepy John Estes to any other blues singer, and the same can be said for just about every other artiste. What a marvellous collection of individualists!

Our first meeting with the tour's stars was with Howlin' Wolf at his hotel at three in the afternoon. We must admit to being a little nervous as we waited for him to come down from his room. We'd read in a musical weekly that Wolf didn't talk to white

people, and although we didn't believe it, we were still, well, nervous. The mighty Wolf soon put the lie to the ridiculous afore-mentioned statement. "I was raised with white kids" he told us, "I never knew there was any race problem until much later." Asked how the story might have started he commented "There's people who just want to hurt an artiste, see?" Wolf as a person is huge, dignified, and very direct in his speech. Even when he is sitting at a table drinking coffee, as he was for our first interview, one gets an impression of the immense power he has in reserve.

One of favourite Wolf records is "The Natchez Burning." We asked him about it. "Well, you see, there

was a church that some peoples had turned into a night-club place. That's down off Highway 61. One night a woman dropped a cigarette-end near some tapestries, and the whole building burned down." Wolf was plied with more coffee and dropped what the popular press tends to call — a bombshell. "I'm leaving show business next year — when my contract with Chess Records finishes," he paused — "I am going to work my farm and take it easy for a while." Indignant cries greeted this startling news, but Wolf was adamant. "You see, I'm getting to be an old man, you know." Cries of derision followed this remark — we'd never met a healthier-looking blues singer than Wolf, and the thought of his retirement on account of his 54 years seemed hilarious. We still don't believe it.

Lightnin' Hopkins with the editor



Photo: Brian Smith

Backstage at the Free Trade Hall we met the rest of the tour. Sonny Boy recognised us and asked our opinion on yet another two-tone suit he'd had made. Lightnin' Hopkins was being attacked by nearly everyone, and unfortunately we didn't get much of an interview with this great singer. We must agree with people who later said he was the hit

Continued overleaf

The Mighty Dixon



Photo: Brian Smith

Continued from Previous Page

of the package. Never have we heard such a brilliant sound.

Someone we did talk to at length was Hubert Sumlin, an extremely friendly man with a great sense of humour. Hubert comes from Greenwood, Missouri, and was discovered by Wolf in Arkansas in the mid fifties. His guitar-playing is so far removed from any other artiste in this field, that it would take an expert musician to interpret it properly. Suffice to say, we were completely knocked out.

The mighty Dixon was on hand, and was being his genial self as usual. Sometimes we think this man is almost too good. A complete professional,

and yet a charming man. He is also a good judge of fine whisky.

Sugar Pie Desanto we found very self-assured, and perhaps not totally suited to concerts of this kind. Her voice was great, but her material was rather odd. Why didn't she sing her records? Still, we're glad she came, even if it was because we were sitting in the second row from the front!

Sleepy John Estes was nothing short of sensational. It might be expected that an old man, recently re-discovered, would be uneasy and perhaps a bit rusty. Not a bit of it. He was exactly the same as on record, and went down extremely well, with Hammie Nixon's effective jug and harp-playing in support.

Sunnyland Slim, Clifton James, and Wee Willie provided adequate support for the artistes that needed it, but without setting the house on fire. Lightnin' Hopkins was too much. It was like getting a drop of water when you need a jugfull. He was much younger-looking than we expected, and was everything a fan could want. We must have him back.

The Wolf came on last, and

was marvellous. Almost too much again, this man more than lived up to his reputation. One song he did which surprised us was "Dust My Blues." Asked about it later, he said that Elmore James was a very good friend of his, and that he liked to sing the song in his memory. We believe that he has, in fact, recorded "Dust My Blues" for an L.P. which was made in Germany.

We haven't mentioned Sonny Boy Williamson's new role as compere! This happened at Birmingham on the day after the Free Trade Hall concert. Sonny Boy enjoyed himself greatly, bringing on to the stage "our host with the most," and "the man who ain't no pocket-picker, he's a guitar picker" and so on. Sonny Boy himself was even better than at last year's concerts. One interesting thing he did was to sing "Trying To Get Back On My Feet" with Hubert Sumlin playing acoustic guitar. Wee Willie also played acoustic guitar, and sang the song he has recorded for Victoria Spivey's label, "A Weak Brain, And A Narrow Mind."

No space to tell it all—we must close by saying that this was the greatest yet. We look forward to the next

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SCREAMIN' JAY TO TOUR!

Screamin' Jay Hawkins, one of the world's greatest ravers, is due to tour this country in February next year. His manager, John Cann, with his charming wife Gloria, visited this country on October 27th to arrange the trip. The story behind the re-discovery of Jay is an unusual one, and goes like this; sometime ago, we reported that Jay was working in a night-club in Honolulu, Hawaii. True, but only as a compere and house pianist! This state of affairs was soon remedied by John Cann, who, long a fan of Jay's, happened to be in Hawaii for a holiday. He wasted no time in persuading Jay to return to New York, where Jay was signed to Roulette Records. Jay had by now fully recovered from his stab wound inflicted by his ex-



Screamin' Jay Hawkins — a photo from his personal collection

partner, a girl called Shoutin' Pat. The next step was to record some new tracks for a public that has been starved of Jay's work for several years. "Whammy," "Party Girl," "Strange," "Feast Of The Mau, Mau," and, believe it or not — "Hard Day's Night," were the first to be waxed.

It is now only a matter of

time before Jay is at the top once more. We wish him the very best of success, and would like to assure him of a great welcome when he sets foot in this country. (We also extend a warm welcome to "Junior," a great friend of Jay's.) ("Junior" is a skull attached to a pole, which Jay carries with him wherever he goes).

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The Northern Blues Appreciation Society has a new home; The Crown Hotel, Blackfriars, off Deansgate, Manchester. Meetings every Thursday. Send S.A.E. for application form to M. Neil Carter, 22 Southern Crescent, Bramhall, Cheshire.

Anyone interested in label-listings of U.S. R & B companies should write to Rodney Patton, 133 Ashbourne Road, Derby.

Brian Smith, R'n B Scene's expert on culinary affairs, has many photos of U.S. blues stars for sale. Send S.A.E. for lists to 22 Shayfield Drive, Manchester 22. Brian also runs the official Carl Perkins Fan Club.

John and Gloria Cann send greetings to all fans of Screamin' Jay Hawkins, and look forward to Jay's tour of England in February 1965. Why not be at London Airport to welcome Jay? Details of exact time of arrival to be published when known.



RUFUS THOMAS — *Photo Courtesy Stax Records*



SAY MAN

"Don't Knock The Rock," "Rock, Rock, Rock," and "Disc-Jockey Jamboree" were re-released? Why is it so difficult to bring over American backing musicians for bluesmen, when whole orchestras of jazz musicians make the trip? It's far cheaper to import Crown L.P.'s yourself than to buy them at the prices we've seen some shops charge for them Anyone like to start a campaign against miming on T.V.? They'd have our full support King Size Taylor and Neil Carter Britain's leading Solomon Burke fans Little Walter's gestures when talking of other harp players are hilarious There ought to be a law preventing the covering of Coasters records "Mama Keep Your Big Mouth Shut" very popular with the birds in Manchester What's happening to Little Richard these days? Touching sight at Bill Haley concert in Manchester — two ravers got up to jive in the aisles Lazy Lester and Lightnin' Slim a great person team according to Chris Strachwitz, so lets have them here Alvin Robinson a name to watch Rock your baby slow until the next edition but not too slow.

Strange, our photo of Sugar Pie Desanto in the last issue looked nothing like her! Is there any hope of seeing any of the Excello bluesmen here? **We must have Lightnin' Hopkins back** Sonny Boy Williamson is now spending about half his time in this country Kindly be aware that Vocalion is issuing some brilliant material by the Dixie Hummingbirds John Lee Hooker refused to play without John Lee and the Groundhogs backing him recently By the way, the Ground Hogs seem likely to record for Vee-Jay soon; we wish them the best Chuck Berry reported to be bringing own drummer and pianist with him on next tour Which British record company is frightened of the lyrics in Wolf's "Wang-Dang-Doodle"? "My Home Is A Prison" by Lonesome Sundown another Excello must Little Richard and John Lee

Hooker both had some very angry remarks to make about doing split dates, when they haven't been told beforehand Who shall blame them? Buddy Guy definitely expected next year Howlin' Wolf has used Ike Turner, on piano, as a session man Wee Willie Dixon thinks highly of Dale Hawkins New sound system at Manchester's Free Trade Hall superb, wish we could say the same for some other concert halls we have visited Hubert Sumlin plays a specially made Fender guitar called a Zebra *Melody Maker* please note Wolf plays an Epiphone, not an "Ampophone" guitar Isn't it about time Pye stopped duplicating tracks on Blues L.P.'s? (Please). "Curse Of The Mummy's Tomb" a knockout film. Talking of films, isn't it about time the great rock masterpieces like "The Girl Can't Help It,"

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